

Title, director and release year?

The Persuaders was a 2004 episode of the PBS program *Frontline* directed by Rachel Dretzin and Barak Goodman showing the dark side of advertising and the research and schemes the power it.

What is the central argument or narrative of the film?

The central argument of the film is that something we accept as just a part of life, advertising, is in fact more sinister and calculated than we realize.

How is the argument or narrative made and sustained? (Use concrete examples from the film to illustrate.)

They make the argument in the film by pulling back the curtain and having candid interviews with some of the brains behind various advertising campaigns and techniques, including a french psychologist and famous American wordsmith.

**What sustainability issues did you spot?
Identify and explain each. (Examples -
Political, Legal, Economic, Technological,
Media, Organizational, Educational,
Behavioral, Cultural, Ecological)**

Present in this film were economic, media, and cultural sustainability issues. Our consumer culture is not sustainable from an economic and ecological standpoint, and advertising very much drives that and fuels consumers desires, so these issues are all very interrelated. Advertising necessitates some form of media so it is a media issue as well.

**What parts of the film did you find most
persuasive and/or compelling?**

Some of the most persuasive parts of the film were when they really showed some of the crazy lengths companies and consultants go to to “crack the code” on how to market things. They conduct elaborate and abstract research to discover buyers subconscious associations and desires and then leverage that in their advertising.

Does the film have emotional appeal to you? Why? (Use concrete examples from the film to illustrate.)

The film does have an emotional appeal because it at times has a little bit of the conspiracy theory vibe to it, which always plays on people's emotions who are viewers when they realize there is more to something than meets the eye.

Does the film rely more on science or emotion? (How does the film balance the scientific argument and the emotional argument?)

The film definitely relies more on science, since you are hearing about advertising right from the horse's mouth. The people in the industry have no qualms about what they are doing and understand completely.

Does the film want you to do something? If the film does suggest action, do you think it is a good idea? Will the suggested action help?

The film doesn't really suggest a specific action, it more is sort of an interesting look at the industry and shedding light on a dark area of capitalism.

Are there other actions that are not suggested that should be taken?

I think they could maybe suggest some consumer strategies for avoiding being tracked and analyzed and exploited, especially since this is an even bigger concern today with the advent of the internet.

What was the target audience for this film? Why?

I think the target audience was really everybody, but probably more specifically, those with disposable income who fall prey to the tactics and strategies of advertisers and "persuaders".